

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-11 ISO-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2830

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

USMISSION USUN NY

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

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DEPARTMENT PASS USIA

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, MOPS, AO, WF, ZA, UR, CU

SUBJECT: ZAMBIAN PRESS URGES SOVIET/CUBAN ATTACK ON SOUTH AFRICANS

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. AS VICTORIOUS CUBAN-LED MPLA FORCES
MARCHING SOUTHWARD THROUGH ANGOLA NEAR SOUTH AFRICAN DEFENSIVE
POSITIONS GUARDING THE CUNENE RIVER PROJECT, THE ZAMBIAN PRESS
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HAS SUDDENLY COME OUT WITH EDITORIALS STRANGELY CALLING NOT RPT

NOT FOR CUBAN/SOVIET WITHDRAWAL FROM ANGOLA BUT FOR THEM TO BECOME THE SPEARHEAD OF A BATTLE FOR THE LIBERATION OF NAMIBIA AS WELL AS ANGOLA FROM SOUTH AFRICAN FORCES.

2. FIRST SUCH EDITORIAL APPEARED FEBRUARY 12 IN GOVERNMENT-OWNED ZAMBIA DAILY MAIL WHICH ACKNOWLEDGED DEFEAT OF UNITA FORCES AND INEVITABILITY OF OAU RECOGNITION OF MPLA REGIME IN LUANDA AS A CONSEQUENCE OF CUBAN/SOVIET MILITARY MIGHT. NOTING THAT CUBANS HAD CLAIMED THEIR TROOPS WERE IN ANGOLA TO FIGHT THE SOUTH AFRICANS, AND ALSO THAT SO LONG AS CUBANS WERE THERE SOUTH AFRICANS WOULD ALSO CONTINUE OCCUPY SOUTHERN ANGOLA TO PROTECT THEIR INTERESTS, MAIL CONCLUDED (NOT WITHOUT TOUCH OF SARCASM) THAT IT NOW TIME FOR CUBANS TO DO WHAT THEY HAD ALLEGEDLY COME TO ANGOLA FOR -- DRIVE SOUTH AFRICANS ENTIRELY OUT OF ANGOLA. MAIL URGED OAU TO MAKE IT ITS BUSINESS TO SEE THAT "GALLANT ADVANCE OF THE CUBANS" ENDS UP IN THE LOGICAL PLACE-- THE BORDER AREAS WITH SOUTH AFRICA.

3. ON FEB. 13 PARTY-OWNED TIMES OF ZAMBIA PICKED UP THIS THEME. IN EMOTIONAL AND SOMEWHAT DISJOINTED AND CONTRADICTORY ARGUMENT, TIMES CALLS UPON SOVIETS AND CUBANS TO PROVE THEY ARE READY TO SACRIFICE ALL FOR WORLD SOCIALIST REVOLUTION BY PUSHING ON INTO NAMIBIA AND EVEN INTO SOUTH AFRICA ITSELF. ONLY SUCH A STEP, TIMES DECLARED, COULD "JUSTIFY, SANCTIFY, AND GLORIFY" SOVIET AND CUBAN INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA AND DEATHS OF THOUSANDS OF ANGOLANS IN THAT FIGHTING. "BOTH THE SOVIET UNION AND REVOLUTIONARY CUBA WILL BE LEAVING AFRICA IN A CATASTROPHIC MIDSTREAM IF THEY CALL OFF THE FIGHT ON THE SOUTHERN BORDERS OF ANGOLA AND PACK FOR HOME." TIMES ADDS THAT THIS MILITARY EVENTUALITY, HITHERTO "A MAD PHANTASY", IS POSSIBLE "THANKS TO THE US" WHICH IN ANGOLA "HAS PROVED THE POINT THAT (IT), WHICH HAS STOOD FOR PEACEFUL ACTION TO REACH PEACE, HAS IN FACT NEITHER THE NATIONAL WILL NOR OFFICIAL INTEREST TO DEVELOP SENSIBLE PRACTICAL STEPS TO MAKE CONCRETE WHAT THEY HAVE PROFESSED." SOVIET UNION, ON OTHER HAND, HAS PROVED IN ANGOLA THAT IT "HAS BOTH THE NATIONAL WILL AND OFFICIAL RESOLVE TO TAKE PAINFUL BUT CONCRETE STEPS TO REACH THE GOALS OF WHAT THEY SEE AS THE ONLY WAY OUT." END UNCLASSIFIED.

4. PAO CALLED ON TIMES EDITOR IN CHIEF PANABANTU FOLLOWING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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APPEARANCE ABOVE EDITORIAL. PUNABANTU SAID THAT ANGOLA HAS BECOME "WATERSHED" IN LIBERATION OF SOUTHERN AFRICA. SOVIETS AND THEIR ALLIES, WHO HAVE MADE CASE FOR YEARS FOR REVOLUTIONARY, ARMED STRUGGLE APPROACH TO AFRICAN LIBERATION HAVE BEEN PROVED RIGHT. US, WHICH HAS CONSISTENTLY CALLED FOR PEACEFUL APPROACH, HAS NOW BEEN SHOWN WRONG AND CAN HARDLY EXPECT PLAY ANY FUTURE ROLE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. THAT US DID NOT OR COULD NOT ACT DECISIVELY IN ANGOLA, WHEN IT HAD OPPORTUNITY

COME INTO SITUATION WHERE IT WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ALIGNED WITH MINORITY REGIME, IS "A TRAGEDY." ZAMBIANS AND OTHERS WHO HAD FOLLOWED POLICY OF REASON AND SOUGHT PROMOTE CHANGE IN REGION BY PEACEFUL NEGOTIATION AND PERSUASION HAVE BEEN DISCREDITED AND WILL NO LONGER BE ABLE RESIST VOICES OF AFRICAN MILITANTS WHO REJECT PEACEFUL SOLUTIONS. QUESTION NOW, SAID PUNABANTU, IS WHETHER SOVIETS AND THEIR CUBAN ALLIES ARE IMMEDIATELY PREPARED TO ESCALATE SITUATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA THROUGH INTRODUCTION OF MORE TROOPS AND WEAPONS OR RISK ABRUPT LOSS OF PRESTIGE THEY HAVE ACQUIRED AMONG CERTAIN AFRICAN CIRCLES WERE THEY TO STOP NOW ON BORDERS OF NAMIBIA.

5. COMMENT: PUNABANTU AND ZAMBIAN PRESS EDITORIALS REFLECT GROWING MOOD OF FRUSTRATION, DISCOURAGEMENT, AND UNCERTAINTY AMONG SENIOR ZAMBIAN OFFICIALS FOLLOWING SWIFT COLLAPSE OF ORGANIZED FNLA/UNITA MILITARY RESISTANCE, APPARENT POLITICAL AS WELL AS MILITARY TRIUMPH OF MPLA AND ITS CUBAN/SOVIET ALLIES, THE SNOWBALL TREND TOWARD RECOGNITION OF PRA AMONG AFRICAN MODERATES, AND FAILURE OF US AND OTHER WESTERN POWERS TO PREVENT ALL THIS FROM HAPPENING. SEPTTEL REPORTS VIEWS OF STATE HOUSE AND CABINET MINISTERS.

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